



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



GOLDEN COYOTE EXERCISE UNDERWAY IN THE BLACK HILLS

The South Dakota National Guard's 28th annual Golden Coyote training exercise is underway in Rapid City and the southern Black Hills, with more than 2,200 service members participating from across the country and the world. The two-week training exercise, which began June 9 and continues until the 23, allows military forces to conduct combat support and combat service support missions in a realistic training environment and provide valuable services to the public.

Created in the mid 1980's with the cooperation of the National Forest Service and Custer State Park, the exercise provides relevant training opportunities in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense. Golden Coyote has developed into one of the nation's top training opportunities for National Guard, reserve and active-duty forces, as well as military personnel from foreign countries.

There are 37 units representing 17 states and six foreign nations participating in the exercise and from multiple branches of military service – Army, Navy, and Air Force – working together to create an invaluable training experience. This includes medical, chemical, transportation, signal, aviation, military police, engineer and quartermaster units. These military forces train on their equipment and employ tactics to prepare them for any future overseas deployment. Military forces are able to participate in numerous warrior training tasks and battle drills, such as urban combat operations, medical aid, and day and night convoy operations. Units can also participate in combat patrols, fire arms training and reacting to improvised explosive devices. Participating units also complete various projects that help improve the forest and local communities. Local residents receive numerous benefits of the many engineering projects being conducted during the training exercise.

Units will be repairing roadways, providing reclamation of hazardous wilderness areas and hauling cut timber from the forest.

This year's exercise also includes members from the United Kingdom, Denmark, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Suriname.

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SOLDIERS COMPETE IN BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

The South Dakota Army National Guard's 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade held their Best Warrior competition June 8-10 at Camp Rapid, where 26 soldiers competed against one another to be named the brigade's best soldier.

The soldiers competed in five physical events that challenged their skills in land navigation, obstacle course, in-door rifle competition, eight warrior tasks and a six-mile road march carrying a 40-pound rucksack. Along with the physical tests, the soldiers had to go before an interview board where their mental toughness was tested with an array of questions and a uniform inspection.

This competition was conducted to determine who will represent the 196th Brigade at the South Dakota Army National Guard Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competition held in October.

This is the second year that the 196th has held the competition. In the past, soldiers would only go before the board in their dress

uniform, but now soldiers must complete tasks they may face at the state competition level, said Command Sgt. Major George Arends, 196th senior-noncommissioned officer.

"What I was looking for in the interview comes from the Army Code of Conduct, 'I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life,'" said Arends. "We're looking for the ultimate warrior that exemplifies

that fighting spirit."

Sgt. Jacob Vissia, from Plankinton, a member of the 211th Engineer Company of Madison, will represent the 196th in the NCO of the Year competition. Spc. Daniel Koupal, of Wagner, a member of Detachment 3, 155th Engineer Company in Wagner, will compete for Soldier of the Year. The brigade competition gives us an opportunity to see where you are weak and where you are strong, said Vissia.

Vissia and Koupal will compete against other Soldiers in October at Camp Rapid to determine who will go on to represent the state at the Region 6 Best Warrior competition.



AIR GUARD FULLY MISSION CAPABLE

After two years of training in new fighters the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing has once again declared itself fully mission capable. Two years ago, the Air National Guard announced that the 114th would receive the 22 Block 40 F-16s from Hill AFB, Utah. The 114th had been flying Block 30 F-16 fighters since 1991. During the months following the conversion announcement the unit's focus was aligned to the completion of a safe and successful transition.

"The Fightn' Lobos of the 114th have successfully accomplished all training requirements in order to become fully mission capable in the Block 40 F-16s," said Colonel Russ Walz, wing commander. "After a demanding and successful training period, I am confident that the Airmen of the 114th Fighter Wing can perform their new mission as needed for our nation's defense. Our maintenance professionals did an amazing job in ensuring this new fleet of aircraft is combat ready!"

The 114th Fighter Wing validated their mission readiness through an intense four-day Operational Readiness Exercise, at Joe Foss Field, last Thursday through Sunday. The exercise simulated actions that the unit would undergo upon mobilization for federal service, deployment to an overseas operating location and the execution of combat missions.

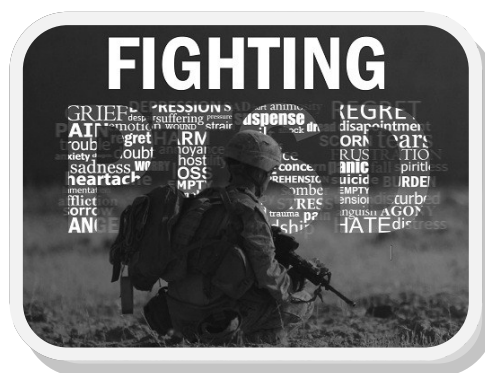
VABHHCS TAILORS PLAN TO EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs has announced that they will be adding approximately 1,600 mental health clinicians as well as nearly 300 support staff to its existing workforce. The VA estimates that five clinicians and two support personnel will be hired to support mental health operations at the VA Black Hills Health Care System. Funding has now been distributed to VA Black Hills and recruitment is underway.

The VA has an existing workforce of 20,696 mental health staff that includes nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. Currently, 144 mental health clinicians and support staff work locally supporting South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana and North Dakota veterans.

With each additional mental health care provider, a facility could potentially reach hundreds more veterans battling mental illness. New providers will join a team that is already actively treating veterans through individualized care, readjustment counseling, and immediate crisis services. Additional staff members also afford opportunities to look long-term and expand into cutting edge Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) research and to explore alternative therapies.

Last year, the VA provided quality, specialty mental health services to 1.3 million veterans. Since 2009, the VA has increased the mental health care budget by 39 percent. Since 2007, the VA has seen a 35 percent increase in the number of veterans receiving mental health services, and a 41 percent increase in mental health staff.



GUARD ASSISTS IN RESCUE MISSION IN NATIONAL PARK

Four South Dakota Army National Guard soldiers assisted in a rescue mission in Badlands National Park, near Interior, Thursday, June 7.

The Soldiers, using a UH-72 Lakota helicopter, conducted a cable-hoist extraction of a park visitor who was hiking, fell and was injured on Notch Trail, according to a National Park Service press release. Dave Johnson, 57, from Audubon, Penn., was hiking alone and when he ventured off the trail and slipped and slid into a crack, according to the release. Park officials stated he started hiking at 7:30 a.m. and had been trapped and unable to get help until he was discovered by other park visitors at approximately 10:30 a.m. He was experiencing severe leg and back pain along with numerous cuts and scrapes. Park Rangers and the Interior Volunteer Fire Department were first on scene after hiking in about three quarters of a mile to find Johnson. Multiple agencies responded to the incident including Kadoka and Philip Ambulance companies, Jackson County Sheriff's officers and the South Dakota Highway Patrol.



The call for assistance to the Guard came at about 11:30 a.m., after Park Service and emergency response personnel determined that the safest and most appropriate method of rescue would be by helicopter.

Incident command officials at the scene made the determination that the SDARNG's UH-72 Lakota helicopter had the right capabilities to extract the injured hiker.

This was the South Dakota Guard's first live-rescue mission in the state with the new UH-72 Lakota helicopter, which was fielded in May 2011. The Guard, along with the National Park Service and other agencies, trained for this exact scenario about a week earlier.

"We trained for this type of scenario on May 30," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Christian Frank, pilot-in-command. "That's how important the interagency coordination and training is. The rescue mission went very smooth." Other SDARNG crew members assisting in the rescue operation were 1st Lt. John Barnes, co-pilot, and crew chiefs Staff Sgt. Anton Oerlline and Sgt. Jarred Fusselman.

"This is what the Guard the does – helping people," said Oerlline. "The training we go through prepares us to be able to respond and assist to an emergency quickly and efficiently." "Using the Lakota in this manner is what it was purchased for," said Frank. "The awareness of our interagency partners of our capabilities, as well as our training together makes us a valuable asset to the state and the people." The Black Hills Life Flight helicopter was piloted by Chief Warrant Officer 4 (Ret.) Wes Barnes, the father of 1st Lt. John Barnes.



FARM LIVING IS THE LIFE FOR ME

On June 6th, residents at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home got to experience “farm living.”

Staff coordinated a “Green Acres—Farm Living” day and invited local vendors to bring in their antique farm equipment and animals from their petting zoos.

In addition, staff grilled hot dogs and hamburgers and served all the barbecue fixings. Events like this afford the residents an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, network and enjoy some great home-cooking!



MUSEUM HOSTS ANNIVERSARY PARTY AND PRESENTS CARD TO MAJ. GEN REISCH

Museum Director Sonja Johnson and Curator Seb Axtman presented Maj. Gen. Timothy Reisch, Adjutant General of the South Dakota National Guard, with a card commemorating the SDNG’s 150 years of service to the state and nation.

Johnson hosted an anniversary party at the South Dakota National Guard Museum on Saturday and had all of the guests sign a card thanking the Guard for their commitment and dedication to serving both their federal and their state missions.

South Dakota’s National Guard has played a major role in conflicts since the Civil War, as well as provided assistance to this state in times of domestic emergencies. With the recent return of the 200th Engineer



Company from their deployment to Afghanistan and the role the South Dakota National Guard played in the flood relief efforts in South Dakota last year, it was a day many people wanted to stop in and share their “thanks” and sign the card.

TIMBER HAUL MISSION BENEFITS NATIONAL FOREST, SIOUX TRIBE AND SOLDIERS

From the Soldier gaining experience, to having the forest cleaned, to Sioux Tribes receiving firewood, many gain from the Golden Coyote timber-haul mission. The annual Golden Coyote training exercise, hosted by the South Dakota National Guard and conducted in cooperation with the National Forest Service and Custer State Park, provides a realistic training environment and valuable services to the public.

The 2113th Transportation Company, based in Paducah, Ky., transported timber from Custer State Park to Pine Ridge, S.D., June 12. "This exercise is a great opportunity for units to tailor their training to their needs," said Brig. Gen. Jeff Marlette, commander of forces for Golden Coyote.

The SDNG has partnered with the NFS and Custer State Park to give firewood to Sioux Tribes in South Dakota for the past six years. "This mission cleans up the forest," said Brent Foster, a timber program manager with the NFS who helps coordinate between the SDNG and the Oglala Sioux Tribe. "We don't have to burn it up ourselves in order to clean up the forest; we can give it to them and fulfill their need for a heating source."

Members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe benefit by receiving a heating source for the winter. "A high percentage of homes here have wood stoves and utilize that wood as heat," said Dennis Yellow Thunder, the natural resources technician for the Oglala Sioux Tribe. "That helps lower or eliminate the cost of propane or natural gas bills." Yellow Thunder oversees even and thorough distribution of the timber to all 10 districts on the reservation. The population on the Pine Ridge Reservation is approximately 18,000. Tribal members use the timber for more than just firewood. "Some wood is also used to build fences, corrals and shades," said Yellow Thunder. "I used some last year to put up a fence."

Marlette said, this exercise is a great testament to how we come together with the civilian public. It prepares our service members to meet homeland security missions and provide services to the public. "The simple fact that this whole mission is about giving the tribe firewood, makes it special," said Sgt. Alan Cruse, a truck driver with the 2113th Trans. Co. "We're actually meeting the needs of somebody."



U.S. AND DENMARK SOLDIERS TRAIN TOGETHER AT GOLDEN COYOTE

Whether the volunteer soldiers from Army National Guard or the Danish Home Guard are supporting their mission in homeland defense or are deploying overseas, first-aid training is always important to master. It can – literally – save human lives.

This is why the motivation is high when first-aid instruction is on the agenda at the South Dakota National Guard's Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The participating soldiers at Golden Coyote are even more motivated by the training environment. For many new National Guard Soldiers, it's the first time they get the opportunity to train together with soldiers from other countries, and for the soldiers of the Danish Home Guard, it is the first time they are participating in an exercise in the U.S.

Soldiers from the 860th Military Police Company, Arizona Army National Guard of Tucson, conducted the training with the Danish platoon for two days. Soldiers from the two units participated in a joint instruction in first-aid, which was conducted by both Danish and American instructors. Spc. Jackie Rivera, of the 860th, was the assistant instructor and gave the first lecture. In her civilian career, Rivera works at a hospital as a patient care technician.

"It has been a great opportunity to train with the Danish soldiers," said Rivera. "We have been integrated fairly easily and the instruction in first-aid went really well."

The training focused on how to assess a wounded person and how to control bleeding, said Pvt. Thorvaldur, a first-aid instructor with the Danish Home Guard.

"The Americans are pretty good. They know what they are doing and that makes it much easier," said Thorvaldu. "My assistant was quite good and a capable person. The Golden Coyote exercise is a great opportunity because we get to train with units and material that we can't do at home."

Besides first-aid training, the two platoons have also conducted joint training of standard operating procedures, cordoning and mounted attacks.



NEW SERVICE OFFICERS AT DAY AND MEADE COUNTIES

Day County has selected Mike Wiley as their new Veterans Service Officer. Mike began his duties with Day County on May 30. Mike fills the position vacated by Les Rowland who retired June 7, 2012.

Meade County has selected Angela Sutton as their new Veterans Service Officer. Sutton replaces David Egermier.



Larry Rudebusch



Angella Sutton



Mike Wiley

SD NATIONAL GUARD PARTICIPATES IN LAKOTA NATION'S FLAG DAY

The relationship between the South Dakota National Guard and the Lakota Nation continues to grow. Members of Company D, 1st Battalion, 112th Aviation Regiment traveled to the Standing Rock Reservation for their Flag Day celebration in a UH-72A Lakota helicopter June 10. The Standing Rock Reservation stretches over the North Dakota and South Dakota border.

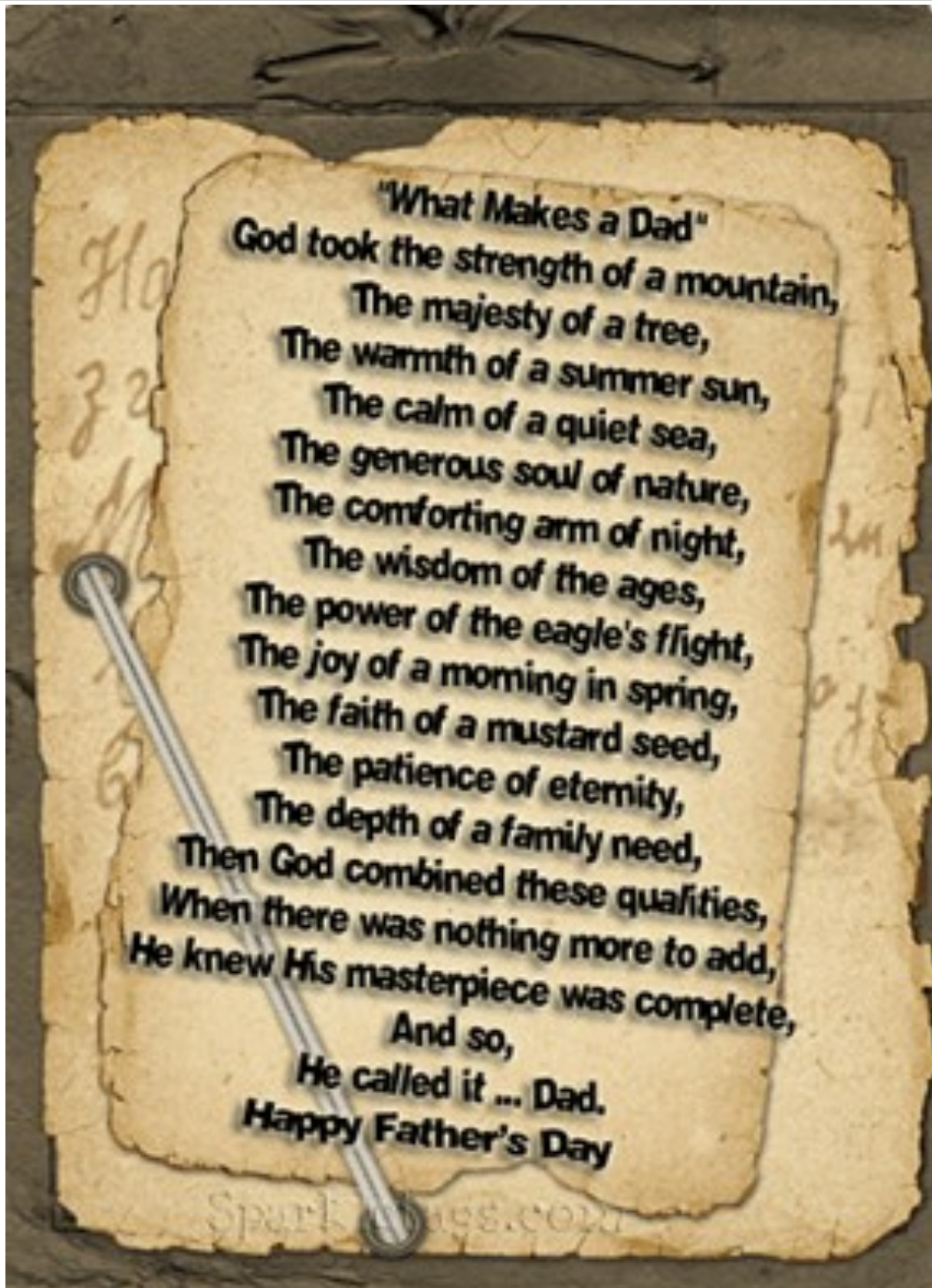
Every year in Cannonball, the Lakota Nation takes time to remember and honor their deceased during their Flag Day celebration. During the ceremony, 52 American flags were flown in honor of the fallen. When a service member dies the family receives an American flag from the military. Each flag flown here today was brought by the families of the deceased veterans.

Elders and leaders of the Standing Rock Reservation not only honored their fallen heroes of the past but they performed a traditional blessing for the helicopter. The blessing is to help protect the aircraft and the pilots during their missions. A sacred Red-tailed Hawk feather was presented to the crew in honor of the partnership.

"Our Lakota helicopters are based right in the center of the Lakota Nation so we decided to form a connection between the Lakota Nation and the National Guard," said Master Sgt. Kelley Moore, who has played a vital role in fostering relations between the Guard and Lakota Nation. "One of the important steps in establishing a relationship with the Lakota community is the ceremonial blessing of the aircraft." This is the third helicopter to be blessed by the tribe during a blessing ceremony. Its purpose is to provide medical and casualty evacuations, disaster relief and aid in homeland defense.



HAPPY FATHERS DAY



STOUX FALLS AIR SHOW AND CONTINUED CELEBRATION OF THE SDNG'S 150TH

A demonstration of aviation airpower and talent will once again come to the skies of Sioux Falls July 21-22. The 2012 Sioux Falls Airshow will be held at Joe Foss Field, South Dakota Air National Guard base and will be held in conjunction with a 150th anniversary celebration of the South Dakota National Guard.

With a proud 150-year heritage of serving as the state's militia, the SDNG finds its origins dating back to 1862 as part of the Dakota Territory.

Celebrations have been taking place across the state to recognize the 150th anniversary of the National Guard in South Dakota and this will be the East River resident's turn to recognize this momentous occasion.

"There is no better way for the Air National Guard of South Dakota to celebrate our great heritage of service to our state and nation than on our 150th anniversary and to demonstrate and showcase aviation capabilities of the past and present with this air show," said Col. Russ Walz, 114th Fighter Wing commander.

The 2012 Sioux Falls Airshow will feature numerous military aircraft to include the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, the F-22 Raptor Demonstration Team, the U.S. Marines AV-8 Harrier, U.S. Navy FA-18 Super Hornet, U.S. Air Force Heritage Flight, and our state's very own F-16 Fighting Lobos. Civilian acts that will perform include the Vanguard Squadron, Dick Schulz Airshows, Jacquie B Airshows, and the P-51 Mustang.

The cadets of the U.S. Air Force Academy will make their first appearance at the Sioux Falls Airshow honoring our country by carrying in the stars and stripes to start the show. The cadets of the Wings of Blue have become one of the outstanding parachute teams in the country traveling to local, national and international shows.

While the majority of the action will be taking place in the skies over Joe Foss Field, impressive static displays will also grace the flightline. The B-1 Lancer, C-17 Globemaster, A-10 Warthog, CV-22 Osprey, C130 Hercules, T-38 Talon, KC-135 Air Refueler, F-15C and D, and various Army National Guard helicopters just to name a few.

An array of past and present Army National Guard vehicles, artifacts and uniforms will also be on display, to include a number of informational kiosks highlighting the history of the SDNG.

"We are very proud to be celebrating this historic milestone in our organization's history, and we look forward to continuing that lineage of service to our state and nation," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the SDNG. "Other than during World War II when there was a total mobilization of the South Dakota National Guard, these past 10 years clearly ranks among the most significant periods of our history."



HOT SPRINGS POKER RUN



Saturday, August 4th

American Legion Post 71

10am Bikers' Games & Show -N- Shine

8pm Dance @ American Legion

Poker Run T-Shirts available!

Sponsored by Battle Mountain Post 71



Contact tompranger@hotspringshotmail.com or call Tom 605-745-4118

Sunday, August 5th

State Veterans Home

8:30 a.m. Church Service

9:00 a.m. Registration

11:00 a.m. Parade thru town

& off to the Poker Run through the Southern Black Hills by Mt. Rushmore!

(Receive map route and stops at Registration)

1st Poker Hand: \$15. First 250 paid Poker hands receive a free Bandanna. 2nd Poker Hand \$10.

Winners announced 6:30pm @ American Legion



Don that leather, polish your bike, and plan to travel west for the 10th Annual American Legion Riders Chapter 7 Poker Run August 4-5, in Hot Springs.

Registration will be held at the American Legion Post (1045 Jennings Avenue) at 10:00 am (MT) on the 4th.

The Show "N" Shine and the Motorcycle games will be held at Centennial Park (342 N. Garden Street) at 1:00 pm and the barbeque and dance at the American Legion Post starting at 6:00 pm.

Church services will kick off Sunday's events and will be held at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home (2500 Minnekahta Avenue) at 8:30 am followed by registration at 9:00 am and the poker run starting at 11:00 am.

Award presentations will take place back at the American Legion Post at 6:30 pm

Benefits from this run are donated to the State Veterans Home. For more information, call Tom at 605-745-4118 or send an email to:

tppranger@hotsprings@hotmail.com

Upcoming Events

Jun. 14-17—American Legion State Convention—Watertown
Jun. 21—Rapid City Homeless Connect
Jun. 23-24—Thirty-Day Yellow Ribbon Event for the 200th EN/139th BSB—Sheraton—Sioux Falls
July 2—Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—Black Hills National Cemetery—9:00 am
July 4—Independence Day—State Offices Closed
July 11—SD Veterans Council Meeting—American Legion Post 15—Sioux Falls—10:30 am
July 21-22—Sioux Falls Air Show
Jul. 21—SD Convoy of Hope Stand Down—Rapid City
July 28-29—Thirty-Day Yellow Ribbon Event for the 189th AVN—Rapid City
Aug. 15—Veterans Job Fair—Sioux Falls VFW (3601 S. Minnesota Avenue) 10:00 am—2:00 pm
Aug. 23—VABHHCS Stand Down—Rosebud/Mission
Aug. 27-29—VSO Annual Benefits School—Pierre
Aug. 27—VABHHCS Stand Down—Rapid City
Aug. 29—Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Stand Down—McLaughlin
Aug. 30—Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Stand Down—Eagle Butte
Aug. 30– Sept. 3—SD State Fair—Huron (Veterans Day—Aug. 30)
Sept. 11—Stand Down—Wagner National Guard Armory—610 E. SD HWY 46 (10:00 am—2:00 pm)
Sept. 21—Stand Down—Sioux Falls - VFW— 3601 S. Minnesota Ave. (9:00 am—3:00 pm)
Sept. 25—Stand Down—Aberdeen Civic Center—203 S. Washington (2:00 pm—7:00 pm)
Sept. 25 Pierre Homeless Connect

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